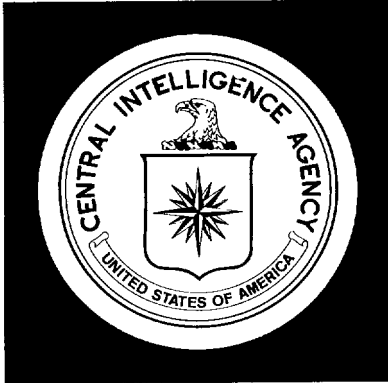


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2 August 1972

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25X1

Approved For Release 2004/07/08 : CIA-RDP79T00975A022400110002-9

2 August 1972

25X1

# *Central Intelligence Bulletin*

## CONTENTS

25X1

WEST GERMANY: Foreign policy deliberations. (Page 5)

25X1

25X1

Approved For Release 2004/07/08 : CIA-RDP79T00975A022400110002-9

25X1

Approved For Release 2004/07/08 : CIA-RDP79T00975A022400110002-9

Next 3 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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WEST GERMANY: The government, with an eye on the December elections, will deliberate next week on the course of its foreign policy.

In its first session following Chancellor Brandt's vacation, the cabinet on 9 August will decide how to respond to Finland's proposal of 10 July to recognize both German states. Bonn's reaction has stiffened in recent weeks, as firm support to oppose the bid developed within NATO. The Finns, hoping to move in tandem in negotiations with both German capitals, nevertheless began talks with an East German delegation on 31 July.

The cabinet will also assess prospects for a basic political treaty with East Germany. As a result of another round of talks today and tomorrow, State Secretary Bahr is expected to recommend cabinet approval for moving from exploratory talks to formal negotiations. Some West German cabinet members, however, may urge a slowdown in negotiations with Pankow because compromises embodied in an early draft treaty might give the opposition new ammunition in the election campaign.

Another subject for the cabinet may be the prospective reconciliation treaty with Czechoslovakia. Bonn and Prague have been unable to agree on a formula for invalidating the Munich Agreement of 1938. On 25 July, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko told the West German ambassador that Bonn must accept the Czechoslovak view that the agreement was invalid ab initio and warned that failure to resolve the issue would impede Bonn's relations with other socialist countries.

The cabinet may also consider diplomatic relations with Communist China. Opposition representative Gerhard Schroeder returned from a fact-finding mission to Peking on 29 July, proclaiming that there are no obstacles to diplomatic relations. The Christian Democrats have long criticized Brandt for not

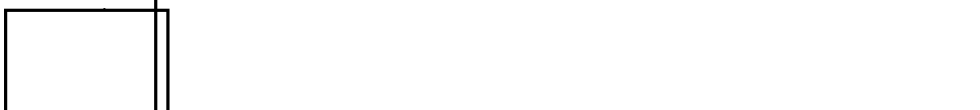
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moving faster toward Peking. Brandt is interested, but fears that relations with Peking could antagonize Moscow and thereby jeopardize Bonn's higher priority objectives in relations with the USSR and Eastern Europe. Some Soviet and East European media have already expressed displeasure over Schroeder's visit.

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2 Aug 72

*Central Intelligence Bulletin*

6

25X1

Approved For Release 2004/07/08 : CIA-RDP79T00975A022400110002-9

25X1

Approved For Release 2004/07/08 : CIA-RDP79T00975A022400110002-9

Next 3 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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